IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method ~~for continuing a multi-player game in case of an absence of a player participating in said game, said method~~ comprising :
———running a multi player game application,
———~~characterized by~~
———receiving an indication that ~~said~~ a player taking part in said multi-player game is absent, and
———continuing the game by simulating the participation of said player who is actually absent.

2. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said multi-player game is a network based multi-player game.

3. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
———monitoring the inputs of at least one player of said multi-player game,
———analyzing said inputs to determine gaming characteristics of said at least one monitored player, and
———simulating the participation of said absent player in correspondence with said determined gaming characteristics.

4. (previously presented) The method according to claim 3, further comprising determining a result of said game based on said determined gaming characteristics of said at least one monitored player.

5. (previously presented) The method according to claim 3, further comprising transferring said determined gaming characteristics to another gaming device.

6. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said indication that a player is absent comprises a notification received from said absent player.

7. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising sending a notification to at least one of said other players of said multi-player game, said notification comprising an information that the participation of at least one player is actually simulated.

8. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the interruption of said game, if all players are absent.

9. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising terminating said simulation of the participation, if said absent player returns to the game.

10. (currently amended) A ~~software tool comprising~~ computer readable medium stored with program code, which when executed by a computer or network device, ~~means stored on a computer readable medium for carrying~~ carries out the method of claim 1 ~~when said software tool is run on a computer or network device~~.

11. (cancelled)

12. (cancelled)

13. (cancelled)

14. (currently amended) An apparatus ~~A multi-player gaming device for continuing a~~ ~~multi-player game in case of an absence of a player participating in said game,~~ comprising:

———a memory,

———a processor ~~being connected~~ in communication with~~to~~ said memory, said processor ~~being~~ configured to run a multi-player game program,

———at least two interfaces ~~being~~ in communication with~~connected to~~ said processor, said interfaces ~~being~~ configured to exchange game data,

~~characterized by~~

———a detector configured to detect an indication that a player of said multi-player game is absent, and

———a simulation component ~~being~~ in communication with~~connected to~~ said processor, said simulation component ~~being~~ configured to simulate the participation of an absent player on the game, if said absence indication has been detected.

15. (currently amended) The ~~multi-player gaming device~~apparatus according to claim 14 further comprising a network interface.

16. (currently amended) The ~~multi-player gaming device~~apparatus according to claim 14 further comprising a mobile telephone.

17. (currently amended) The ~~multi-player gaming device~~apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said simulation component comprises an artificial intelligence engine.

18. (currently amended) A network ~~multi-player game~~ server ~~capable of continuing a~~ ~~multi-player game, if a participant in said game becomes absent,~~ comprising:

a memory,

a processor ~~being~~ in communication with ~~connected to~~ said memory, said processor ~~being~~ configured to run a multi-player game program,

at least one interface in communication with~~connected to~~ said processor, each said interface ~~being~~ configured to receive and transmit game data,

~~said network multi-player game server being characterized by~~

a detector configured to detect an indication that a player of said multi-player game is absent, and

a simulation component ~~being~~ in communication with ~~connected to~~ said processor, said simulation component ~~being~~ configured to simulate the participation of an absent player, if said absence indication has been detected.

19. (new) An apparatus comprising:

means for storing,

means for running a multi-player game program, in communication with said means for storing,

means for exchanging game data, in communication with said means for running a multi-player game program,

means for detecting an indication that a player of said multi-player game is absent, and

means for simulating the participation of an absent player on the game, if said absence indication has been detected, said means for simulating in communication with said means for running a multi-player game program.